



DEVIZES RURAL DISTRICT COUNCIL

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ANNUAL REPORT

of the

MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH

and of the

SENIOR PUBLIC HEALTH INSPECTOR

for the year

1964.

DEVIZES RURAL DISTRICT COUNCIL

The Public Health Department,
Browfort,
DEVIZES,
Wiltshire.

To The Chairman and Members of Devizes Rural District Council.

Mr. Chairman, Ladies and Gentlemen,

I have the honour to present to you my Annual Report on the health and sanitary condition of the Rural District of Devizes for the year 1964.

In compiling this report recommendations contained in the Ministry of Health Circular No.1/65 are followed. Being an account of the health of the area it contains in addition to vital statistics and information on communicable disease, information on services provided under the Public Health, Food and Drugs, and Factories Acts. Special reference is made to certain services which may be of special interest either in terms of topical, local or national aspect.

I wish to record my appreciation for the ready help given by your Chief Public Health Inspector, Mr. G.E. Williams, whose report is incorporated within, and for that of the Health Department Clerical Staff. The report would not be complete without data supplied by Officers in other Departments and I acknowledge their assistance here and in relevant sections within.

A most important function of this Department is that of checking on the fitness and quality of many commodities. Considerable sampling must be undertaken, especially of foodstuffs, milk and water. I would like to take this opportunity of thanking Dr. P. Wormald, Director of Salisbury Public Health Laboratory for his always ready and willing assistance in this matter.

My thanks are also due to the Chairman and Members of the Health Committee for their interest and support, and for their understanding shown towards a newcomer unversed in their ways.

I have the honour to be,
Your obedient Servant,

ALAN H. HALSTEAD.

Medical Officer of Health

PUBLIC HEALTH STAFF

Medical Officer of Health :-

A.H. HALSTEAD, M.B., B.S., D.P.H. (Also M.O.H. Devizes Borough Council, Assistant County Medical Officer and School Medical Officer for Wiltshire County Council).

Allocation of salary for such "mixed appointments" is made. Three elevenths of the salary for this appointment is allocated to the Devizes Rural District Council.

Chief Public Health Inspector :-

G.E. WILLIAMS, M.R.S.H., M.A.P.H.I. (Also Surveyor)

Additional Public Health Inspectors :-

D.W.E. JESSETT, M.A.P.H.I. (Also Deputy Surveyor).

E.W.J. MILLER, A.R.S.H., M.A.P.H.I.

GENERAL STATISTICS

| | | | | | |
|---|------|--------------------------|------|------|----------|
| Area in Acres | .... | .... | .... | .... | 63,491 |
| Population (Registrar General's Estimate) |  | .... | .... | .... | 14,380 |
| Number of Inhabited Houses | { | Privately owned | .... | .... | 3,238 |
| | { | Owned by Local Authority | .... | .... | 964 |
| Rateable Value as at 1st April, 1964. |  | .... | .... | .... | £334,948 |
| Estimated Product of 1d Rate | .... | .... | .... | .... | £1,290 |

VITAL STATISTICS

Birth and Death Rates compared with other Areas. (Births and Deaths per 1,000 population) Standardised.*

| | Birth Rate | | Death Rate | |
|------------------------|------------|------|------------|------|
| | 1963 | 1964 | 1963 | 1964 |
| Devizes Rural District | 17.8 | 18.4 | 10.9 | 9.4 |
| England and Wales | 18.2 | 18.4 | 12.2 | 11.3 |
| Wiltshire | 20.2 | 20.2 | 11.5 | 10.0 |
| Devizes Borough | 14.9 | 16.2 | 7.6 | 10.6 |

*

Comparability figures are supplied to each District by the Registrar General. These take into account the varying age/sex distribution of the population in different parts of the country. When applied to the local rates they allow a more accurate comparison to be made between different areas.

Births and Infantile Deaths.

| | Legitimate | | Illegitimate | | Total |
|----------------------|------------|--------|--------------|--------|-------|
| | Male | Female | Male | Female | |
| Live Births | 98 | 124 | 5 | 8 | 235 |
| Still Births | 1 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 2 |
| Deaths under 1 year | 2 | 3 | 0 | 0 | 5 |
| Deaths under 4 weeks | 2 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 3 |
| Deaths under 1 week | 2 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 3 |

Infantile Mortality Rate.

Only five deaths occurred among children under one year and 235 live births occurred in the District. The Infant Mortality Rate is expressed as the number of deaths among children under one year per thousand live births. Calculation gives a rate of 21.2 for this district although this figure is of little value for comparative purposes since the total numbers are so small. The National Rate is 20.0 deaths per thousand live births and the Wiltshire Rate 22.1

Natural Increase.

Increase of live births over total deaths 4.

INFECTIOUS DISEASE

Measles.

166 cases of measles were notified during the third quarter of the year. Although Roundway, Rowde and Urchfont appeared to have the greatest number of cases nearly all Parishes were involved to some extent.

The disease is mostly of a mild nature in this Country. Complications affecting chest, ears or nervous system occur but are relatively infrequent.

Scarlet Fever.

Eleven cases were notified, mostly from the Bromham area and isolated occurrences. Children under 14 years were mostly affected.

It is well to consider that cases which present as Scarlet Fever (Scarletina) are only a fraction of the number of persons who may be affected in some way by the germ responsible. Many people may be carrying the germ in their throats without more than minor sore throats. Anyone suffering from a sore throat, should be aware of the possibility of spreading the infection by sneezing or coughing, to other people who may react in a more serious way than he does.

Diphtheria.

No notifications were received. To maintain this state it is essential that over 70% of the population should be actively immunised against the disease. This is an aim of the immunisation programme run by the Wiltshire County Council.

Whooping Cough.

Six cases were notified. Immunisation against this disease is carried out at the same time as that against Diphtheria and Tetanus. The "Triple Vaccine" used giving protection against all three diseases in one course of injections.

Poliomyelitis.

No cases were notified. Immunisation against this disease continues using the oral vaccine.

Smallpox.

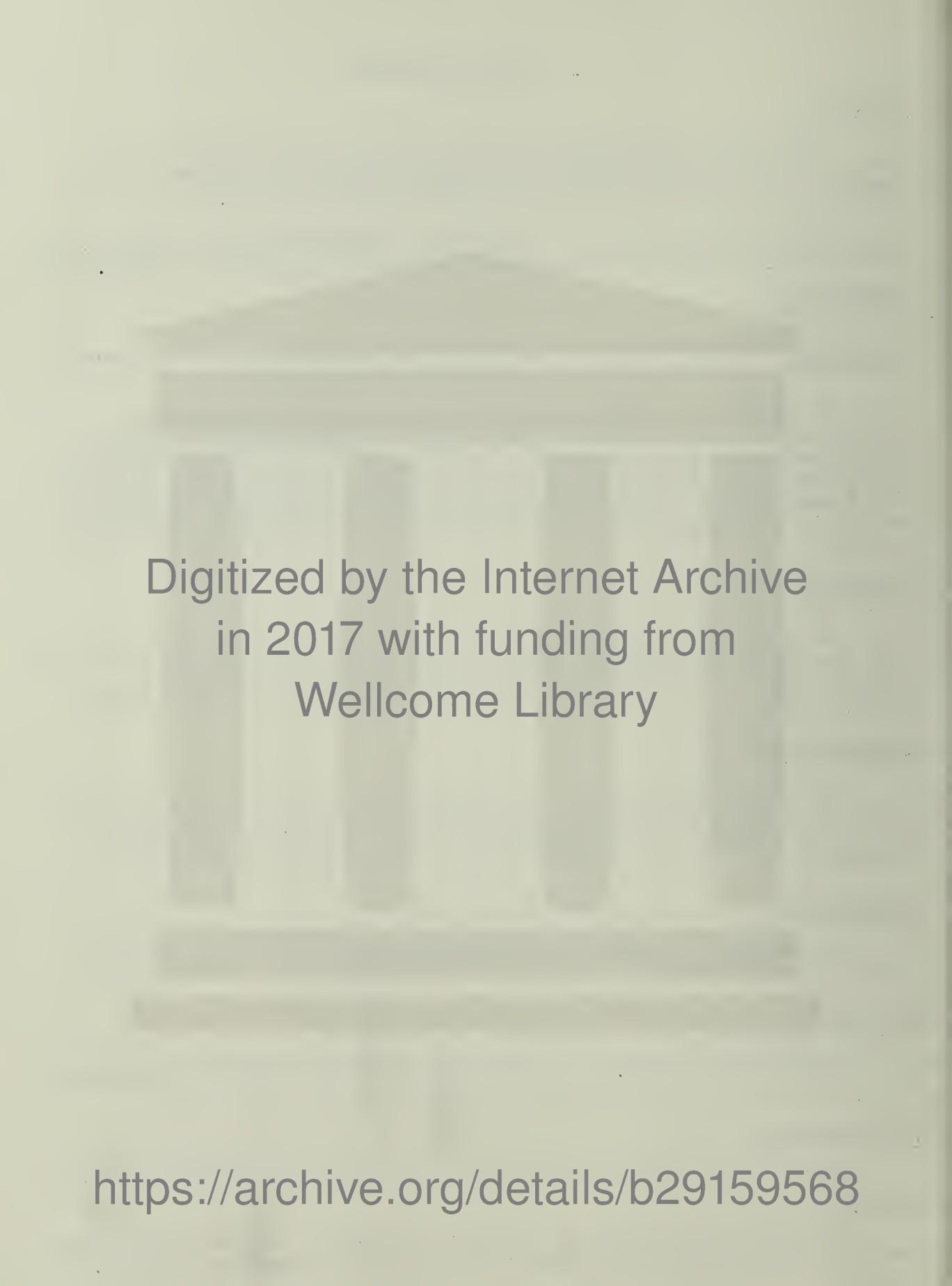
No cases were notified. Vaccination against this disease is carried out by Family Doctors at their patient's request.

Enteric Disease.

No cases of typhoid, paratyphoid fever, or food poisoning were notified.

Dysentery.

Six cases of dysentery were notified in January. This was a small outbreak involving elderly female patients in one Ward of a large local Hospital.

A faint, light-colored watermark of a classical building with four columns and a triangular pediment is visible in the background.

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Infectious Disease contd.

Tuberculosis.

Three cases of tuberculosis of the lungs were notified by the Chest Physician. In such cases full investigation is undertaken by the Chest Clinic and all contacts screened. Chest X-ray or skin testing techniques being used to investigate possible spread to contacts. B.C.G. vaccination is available and is also offered under the Wiltshire County Council's immunisation scheme to all school children if on skin testing, they are found not to have adequate immunity to the disease.

Non-notifiable Infections.

Many infectious conditions exist which are not notifiable except by special action on the part of the local authority. Such action may be advisable if a particular condition is unusually troublesome in the area, and if study and control of its spread is made easier by notification. Among those infections which affect large numbers of the community from time to time are influenza and other virus illnesses of the respiratory or alimentary systems. While the effects are usually mild and the illness of short duration, both social and economic upset may result. Virus diseases are assuming more significance year by year. Considerable work is going on to identify the various agents and the illnesses they cause, but as yet we have not had the same success at developing vaccines as we have had with the bacterial infections. Laboratory investigations of samples for virus infections is a complex and difficult matter. Epidemiological control is thus far from simple and we must still rely on the good sense of our fellow men. Much may be achieved by simple hygiene measures, unfortunately such practises are often ignored, for example many of us treat our "colds" too lightly, and pay little heed to the risk of passing them on to others. Since the most infective stage of most respiratory and other virus infections is during the first few days of the illness, it is sensible that one should consider others as well as one's self during this time.

Brucellosis.

One case of Brucellosis is known to have occurred in this District. A young farm-worker contracted the illness, probably from either handling an infected cow or consuming its raw milk. Milk from this farm was investigated and arrangements made for pasteurisation. The risk of contracting the disease from infected cattle or milk is clearly demonstrated by this case. A true estimate of the incidence of Brucellosis is not easy to obtain. The disease is insidious in its nature and often difficult to diagnose. Our defence must be in supervision by frequent milk sampling until such time as pasteurisation of all milk becomes the accepted rule. Heat-treated milk is the only safe milk, unfortunately, much of our milk is still untreated and a foolish prejudice against pasteurised milk is still apparent within the community. Some will say that the goodness has been taken out - the reverse is more true, others demand untreated milk on the grounds of a better cream line and better taste.

Infectious Disease Contd.

Brucellosis contd.

Laboratory results of samples taken may often give suspicious results. Occasionally this is due to effects of S.19 vaccination of cattle but even when all tests point toward Brucella infection, action cannot be taken unless the Brucella organism has been actually grown on culture. This process takes approximately six weeks, allowing for growth in a guinea-pig. The Brucella organism has something of a reputation for its elusiveness, it is only excreted intermittently and then not necessarily uniformly from each quarter. Isolation thus tends to be a rare occurrence.

Fortunately we have excellent co-operation from our local farmers and pasteurisation is often arranged informally on the first suggestion of difficulty. The problem can hardly be viewed as a local matter for no restriction of movement/use of infected cows exists.

TABLE 1. YEARLY TOTALS.

| | 1960 | 1961 | 1962 | 1963 | 1964 |
|--------------------------|------|------|------|------|------|
| Brucellosis | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 |
| Dysentery | 2 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 6 |
| Measles | 8 | 174 | 17 | 116 | 166 |
| Pneumonia | 1 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 |
| Scarlet Fever | 21 | 13 | 11 | 20 | 11 |
| Tuberculosis | 4 | 4 | 3 | 1 | 3 |
| Whooping Cough | 17 | 17 | 0 | 2 | 6 |
| Meningococcal Infections | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Erysipelas | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Poliomyelitis | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 |
| Food Poisoning | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 |
| Total. | 54 | 212 | 31 | 142 | 193 |

TABLE 2. DISTRIBUTION OF INFECTIOUS DISEASE BY AGE 1964.

| Years | 0 - 4 | 5 - 14 | 15 - 44 | 45 - 64 | Unknown |
|----------------|-------|--------|---------|---------|---------|
| Measles | 73 | 92 | 1 | 0 | 0 |
| Scarlet Fever | 3 | 6 | 2 | 0 | 0 |
| Whooping Cough | 4 | 0 | 2 | 0 | 0 |
| Dysentery | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 6 |
| Tuberculosis | 0 | 0 | 2 | 1 | 0 |

Infectious Disease Contd.

TABLE 3. - 1964 DISTRIBUTION BY PARISH.

| | Measles | Scarlet Fever | Whooping Cough | Dysentery | Tuberculosis |
|---------------------|---------|---------------|----------------|-----------|--------------|
| Allcannings | 3 | - | - | - | 1 |
| Beechingstoke | - | - | - | - | - |
| Bishops Cannings | 8 | 2 | - | - | - |
| Bromham | 6 | 7 | - | - | - |
| Chirton | 1 | - | 1 | - | - |
| Easterton | 5 | - | - | - | - |
| Erlestoke | 1 | - | - | - | - |
| Etchilhampton | 4 | - | - | - | - |
| Great Cheverell | 1 | - | - | - | - |
| Little Cheverell | - | - | - | - | - |
| Marden | - | - | - | - | - |
| Market Lavington | 8 | - | - | - | 1 |
| Marston | - | - | - | - | - |
| Patney | - | - | - | - | - |
| Potterne | 3 | 1 | 2 | - | - |
| Poulshot | - | - | - | - | - |
| Roundway | 25 | 1 | - | 6 | - |
| Rowde | 47 | - | 1 | - | - |
| Seend | - | - | - | - | - |
| Stanton St. Bernard | - | - | - | - | - |
| Stert | 3 | - | - | - | - |
| Urchfont | 47 | - | - | - | - |
| West Lavington | 3 | - | 2 | - | - |
| Worton | 1 | - | - | - | 1 |
| | 166 | 11 | 6 | 6 | 3 |

Prevention of Infectious Disease.

Immunisation against those diseases referred to can be obtained at either the Local Health Authority's Child Welfare Clinics, Immunisation Sessions in Schools, or from one's Family Doctor.

I am indebted to Dr. C.D.L. Lycett, County Medical Officer of Health, for the following figures concerning vaccination and immunisation procedures in Devizes Rural District during the year :-

DIPHTHERIA, WHOOPING COUGH AND TETANUS IMMUNISATIONS.

| Year of Birth | | 1964 | 1963 | 1962 | 1961 | 1960 | 1955/59 | 1950/54 |
|---|----------------|------|------|------|------|------|---------|---------|
| Primary Immunisations Completed During 1964. | Diphtheria | 60 | 103 | 7 | 2 | 1 | 6 | - |
| | Whooping Cough | 60 | 103 | 6 | 2 | - | - | - |
| | Tetanus | 60 | 103 | 7 | 2 | 1 | 40 | 17 |
| Reinforcement injections administered during 1964. | Diphtheria | - | 16 | 39 | 11 | 12 | 154 | 1 |
| | Whooping Cough | - | 13 | 30 | 10 | 3 | 18 | 1 |
| | Tetanus | - | 16 | 39 | 11 | 12 | 124 | 20 |

SMALLPOX VACCINATIONS.

| Age Group | Months | | | | Years | | | |
|-----------------|--------|-------|-------|--------|-------|-------|--------|----|
| | 0 - 3 | 3 - 6 | 6 - 9 | 9 - 12 | 1 | 2 - 4 | 5 - 14 | 15 |
| Vaccinations | 7 | 3 | 3 | 9 | 53 | 6 | - | 7 |
| Re-vaccinations | - | - | - | - | - | 3 | 7 | 16 |

POLIOMYELITIS VACCINATIONS.

| Age Group | 2nd Inj. | 3rd Inj. | 4th Inj. | 3 oral doses | 3rd oral after 2 Injs. | 4th oral after 2 Injs. + 1 oral dose. | 4th oral after 3 Injs. or 3 oral. |
|---|-------------|-------------|-------------|--------------------|---------------------------------|---|--|
| Children born in 1964 | 2 | - | - | 13 | - | - | - |
| Children born in 1963 | 6 | 5 | - | 116 | 1 | - | - |
| Children born in 1962 | 2 | 1 | - | 34 | 4 | 3 | 1 |
| Children born in 1961 | - | - | - | 18 | - | - | - |
| Children and young Persons born 1943-1960. | 1 | 3 | 1 | 43 | 1 | 11 | 96 |
| Young Persons born 1933 - 1942. | - | - | - | 14 | - | - | - |
| Others | - | - | - | 3 | - | - | - |
| Total | 11 | 9 | 1 | 241 | 6 | 14 | 97 |

CAUSES OF DEATH

| | 1964 | | | i 1963. |
|---|------|--------|--------|---------|
| | Male | Female | Total. | Total. |
| 1. Tuberculosis, respiratory | 1 | 0 | 1 | 0 |
| 2. Tuberculosis, other | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 3. Syphiliyic disease | 1 | 0 | 1 | 0 |
| 4. Diphtheria | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 5. Whooping Cough | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 6. Meningococcal infections | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 7. Acute poliomyelitis | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 8. Measles | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 9. Other infective and parasitic diseases | 1 | 0 | 1 | 0 |
| 10. Malignant neoplasm, stomach | 1 | 1 | 2 | 8 |
| 11. Malignant neoplasm, lung, bronchus | 7 | 1 | 8 | 4 |
| 12. Malignant neoplasm, breast | 0 | 1 | 1 | 3 |
| 13. Malignant neoplasm, uterus | 0 | 6 | 6 | 1 |
| 14. Other malignant and lymphatic neoplasms | 6 | 5 | 11 | 17 |
| 15. Leukaemia, aleukaemia | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 16. Diabetes | 1 | 0 | 1 | 2 |
| 17. Vascular lesions of nervous system | 11 | 9 | 20 | 25 |
| 18. Coronary disease, angina | 17 | 11 | 28 | 36 |
| 19. Hypertension with heart disease | 1 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| 20. Other heart disease | 7 | 17 | 24 | 42 |
| 21. Other circulatory disease | 4 | 2 | 6 | 7 |
| 22. Influenza | 0 | 1 | 1 | 2 |
| 23. Pneumonia | 10 | 15 | 25 | 39 |
| 24. Bronchitis | 5 | 2 | 7 | 10 |
| 25. Other disease of respiratory system | 3 | 0 | 3 | 2 |
| 26. Ulcer of stomach and duodenum | 0 | 0 | 0 | 2 |
| 27. Gastritis, enteritis and diarrhoea | 0 | 2 | 2 | 2 |
| 28. Nephritis and nephrosis | 1 | 0 | 1 | 5 |
| 29. Hyperplasia of prostate | 1 | 0 | 1 | 0 |
| 30. Pregnancy, childbirth, abortion | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 31. Congenital malformations | 0 | 4 | 4 | 3 |
| 32. Other defined and ill-defined disease | 13 | 7 | 20 | 17 |
| 33. Motor vehicle accidents | 3 | 0 | 3 | 1 |
| 34. All other accidents | 2 | 3 | 5 | 3 |
| 35. Suicide | 1 | 0 | 1 | 1 |
| | 97 | 92 | 189 | 239 |

189 deaths occurred in the District from various causes, study of which shows a similar pattern to the previous year.

Causes related to the heart and circulatory system take the first place once again. 84 deaths result from conditions in this group with coronary disease and strokes responsible in the main. Cancer deaths total 28 (33 in 1963) but lung cancer has been responsible for 8 deaths as against 4 for 1963.

HOUSING

This subject is most adequately covered in the Chief Public Health Inspector's report but mention should be made of that aspect chiefly concerning your Medical Officer.

Enquiries are frequently received from people anxious for assistance or support in their rehousing application. Medical reasons are often advanced, these are usually easy to determine and the need obvious. Mental stresses are more obscure and on closer enquiry many requests for consideration turn out to involve social factors primarily. These are also of importance for in these cases we are still concerned with the prevention of ill health. Such factors as for example overcrowding, insanitary conditions, and the remoteness of the existing property may have an important bearing on mental well being.

Attention is often drawn to these problems not by the occupant, but by Social Workers. The Health Visitor is an important source of such information, for one must remember that she has to visit every family with young children, and also visit the elderly in their homes. She is thus closely involved with every age group in the community.

The Council are always most helpful in considering those with genuine medical or medico-social grounds for rehousing. They have been conscious of the high proportion of elderly folk in the community, often handicapped in some way. This is reflected in the numerous schemes for bungalow units already built or being built. Such schemes are included in most of the Rural Council Housing Estates and the occupants can feel that they are still a part of the community.

The Hedges House Group Dwelling will be a model and forerunner, we hope, for other similar projects in the near future.

CARAVANS

There is an unfortunate tendency for families unable to find alternative accommodation moving into caravans which are completely unsuited for their needs.

While many people enjoy a few weeks in mid-summer living in a clean, dry caravan they are either confirmed enthusiasts or newcomers determined on enjoying the experience to the utmost. This state of mind would not be shared by those who have to take on this life reluctantly during all seasons. All too often such families have very young children and the environment could hardly be worse.

If this course were undertaken as a means of obtaining rehousing priority at the expense of other deserving cases, sympathy would be justifiably scarce. Usually these families are driven to it by circumstances, and assistance is needed.

OLD PEOPLE

Reference has already been made to the Council's progressive approach towards rehousing of the elderly.

Visits have been made during the year to old people known to the Medical Officer or who have been brought to his attention by Social Workers. It is an accepted policy that the aged should continue to live in their own homes as long as possible. To this end existing public and voluntary services need to be used to their maximum advantage.

Local Health Authority Services are provided by the Wiltshire County Council but this Council assist the aged both by housing and by financial help towards the M.O.W.S. Meals on Wheels Service.

Work on the new County Council Welfare Home in Devizes proceeded towards completion.

Action under National Assistance Act 1948 and 1951.

The Council having certain powers under this Act with regard to elderly or other persons being in need of care and attention, have delegated their Medical Officer to act in an emergency by obtaining a Justice's Order so that such persons may be admitted to Hospital or suitable premises for a limited period. Such a procedure is only undertaken as a last resort.

REPORT OF THE SURVEYOR & CHIEF PUBLIC HEALTH INSPECTOR.

Mr. Chairman, Ladies & Gentlemen,

I have pleasure in submitting to you my Annual Report for the year 1964.

I cordially acknowledge my indebtedness and gratitude to the loyal, competent and cheerful staff for their work throughout the year.

The close association with Doctor Adams as your Medical Officer of Health since February, 1956, was a happy and I trust, fruitful one. We shall miss his sound advice, his humane outlook in the difficult personal problems with which we deal and his ready sense of humour. We will doubtless have the same happy relationship with Doctor Halstead.

Although there are frequent changes in the workmen personnel, it would be impossible to carry out many of the important duties for which the Council are responsible, unless there was a sound core of workmen familiar with the various routines and with the geography and nature of the district. Their services are often unsung and sometimes subject to abuse, they are nevertheless carried out cheerfully and efficiently.

My thanks also to the Clerk and Treasurer for information, advice and help always readily given.

I have the honour to remain,

Your obedient servant,

G.E.WILLIAMS.

Surveyor & Chief Public Health Inspector.

HOUSING.

Building work generally has been on an unprecedented scale throughout the district. Projects were generally slow in getting started and in execution, due to heavy commitments of all building firms and in the scarcity of vital raw materials such as plasterboard, bricks, copper pipes and cement.

Council Housing.

Your Surveyor has felt for some time that the Council's dwellings, and in particular the type and standard of equipment provided within them, was not keeping pace with the times. Since the end of the war the country has undergone a social and economic revolution and the pattern of living has changed and is changing fast.

There is full employment, a National Health Service, Family allowances, Retirement Pensions and Social Insurance Benefits. Total incomes of £30-£40 a week are not uncommon in many Council houses; one household in three has a car and some households have two or three cars; nearly every household has a television set; vacuum cleaners, refrigerators and washing machines are regarded as a must; children stay longer at school and a large percentage avail themselves of further education facilities. All these changes have repercussions on the type, design and equipment necessary to make a satisfactory home. It was therefore necessary to re-examine the type of homes the Council was building which were more suited to the simple agrarian housing requirements of the 1930s. The excellent Parker-Morris Report entitled "Homes for Today and Tomorrow" pinpointed these matters and not a moment too soon. The Council appointed a Sub-Committee to consider this proposition in collaboration with their Architect and Officers.

The first estate to enjoy the benefits of this re-thinking and new conceptions in their entirety is St. Mary's Close, Potterne. Future generations will applaud the foresight and imagination which the Council are exercising in this excellent project. Central heating, an adequate electrical installation, open planning, a pleasant sunny site, good design and ample garage accommodation are some of the features that will impel its occupants to proclaim blessed.

Although seventy-four houses were under construction by the Council only twenty-two were completed during the year. Seventeen pre-war dwellings were modernised by the provision of bathrooms and a hot water supply. The Council decided to raise the standard of improvement and also to try and accelerate the rate of improvement to its pre-war Council dwellings; but this is basically geared to the rate at which those parishes not already sewered can be so served.

Private enterprise housing.

Fifty-two new dwellings of many types were erected. Central heating is becoming common-place and most houses are equipped with a high standard of work saving gadgetry.

Improvement Grants.

Forty-one Standard Grants and six Discretionary Grants were approved in 1964. Since the commencement of the Improvement Grant scheme in 1951, 723 dwellings have been improved. This includes 524 private and 199 council houses. The cost of improving the 524 private dwellings was approximately £336,086 and the amount paid in grant was approximately £131,408. The cost of improving the 199 council houses was £44,716.

It will be seen that through the implementation of the Improvement Grant scheme, the Council have secured the improvement of 723 dwellings whereas they have only constructed 684 new dwellings since the war. The vigorous administration of the Improvement Grant scheme has thus in certain important respects, contributed more in elevating the standard of housing accommodation than the provision of post war council houses.

Housing Annual Return.

Appendix 1 shows in the prescribed form the action taken under various sections of the Housing Act, 1957.

Maintenance of Council houses.

The direct labour organisation which carries out most repairs to Council housing and Council property generally, will be nearly two years old at the end of 1964. The Council owns 963 dwellings and 116 garages together with offices, stores, workshops and sewerage installations representing building and civil engineering works worth over £3 million.

The main task of the building organisation is to repair and maintain this property and keep it in good heart.

The number of repair jobs notified during the year was 1644, which can be split into the following catagories:-

| | | | |
|-------------|------|----------------|------|
| Bricklayer | 431. | Carpenter | 286. |
| Painter | 75. | Plumber | 630. |
| Electrician | 172. | Drainage | 50. |
| | | & fencing etc. | |

In addition to the above, several other works were carried out in regard to the maintenance of sewerage schemes and Council offices etc. Improvements were also carried out to a cottage at Marden.

The total cost of running the direct labour organisation was £9,139. (Approximately £10 per Council house).

Seventy-one houses were painted by direct labour at an average cost of £21 per house - this compares with £29.8s.od., per dwelling for the remaining 103 painted by Contractors.

It is, of course, not possible to say what the cost of maintaining Council houses would have been if all the work had been done by Contractors. Cost however, is only one criterion in the matter. It can be confidently stated that the direct labour organisation has ensured much prompter attention to repairs and the standard of workmanship is superior. Building firms are so heavily committed nowadays that it would be true to assert that a substantial portion of the required repairs would not have been done in the year under consideration. Advancing age, proliferation in amount and type of equipment in Council dwellings together with continually rising prices for materials and labour must inevitably spell a sharp increase in the amount allotted for the maintenance of your property.

Slum Clearance.

Fourteen houses were demolished during the year. Demolition Orders were made on one property and Time and Place Notices were served in respect of two properties.

Caravans.

This form of housing is used on a small scale in this district. The number of caravan licences is 39; of these 33 are for single caravans, 2 for 2 caravans, 1 is for 4 permanent caravans and 2 holiday caravans, 2 are for 6 caravans and 1 for 8 caravans. A permanent residential site for 15 caravans is under construction.

Common Lodging Houses.

There are no common lodging houses in the district.

SEWERAGE.

A small scheme for the hamlet of Sells Green was substantially completed and put into operation during the latter part of 1964. Good progress was also made with the construction of the Poulshot, Worton and Marston scheme which was commenced in June.

Modern sewage works are now operating in the following Parishes:-

| | |
|-------------------------------------|---|
| Erlestoke. | Easterton. |
| Market Lavington. | Bromham. |
| Urchfont (including Wedhampton). | Rowde. |
| Seend (including Sells Green). | Stanton St. Bernard. Etchilhampton. West Lavington. |
| Potterne. | Little Cheverell. |
| Great Cheverell. | |

Nine sewage works and 13 pumping stations and approximately 36 miles of sewers have been constructed at a total cost in the region of £440,600 over the last few years.

Approximately 80% of the population of the district have main sewerage available to them. The following sparsley populated villages and hamlets remain to be sewered (in order of priority)

Chirton, Patney and Marden.
All Cannings & Bishops Cannings.
Lavington Sands.
Chittoe.
Stert.
Beechingstoke.
Eastcott.
Roundway.
Seend Cleeve and Seend Row.

Consideration was given to the possibility of having to enlarge certain of the above relatively new sewage works owing to the exceptional spate of planning applications for comparatively large estates in certain Parishes. The scale of this development is of a kind not envisaged when these sewage works were designed. After careful consideration of the problem in detail it was decided to acquire additional land to enable the sewage works to be enlarged at Rowde, Woodbridge and Urchfont. It was felt that this first essential step would not involve the Council in any large expenditure but they would then be in a position to proceed quickly with extensions to these works if building development in the Parishes concerned got underway quickly.

It is important to remember that unless sewage works are properly operated much of the benefit of the large capital outlays involved will be lost. Furthermore, without regular maintenance these capital assets will depreciate far quicker than they need. To ensure good effluents a high standard of skilled operation and supervision is needed. Not only is the provision of these services expensive but there are limited resources of manpower with the right training and ability to do this work. Some assert that the limited financial resources of the smaller Authorities do not measure up to the demands made upon them and there is apparently evidence in some parts of the country that new sewage treatment works are producing poor results for lack of care and attention. It is not wise to be frugal in these matters, particularly in the provision of adequate labour to do the job. Such frugality gives good grounds for taking away powers from small Local Authorities and transferring them to larger bodies. What happened to Water Supply can happen to sewerage.

The Bristol Avon River Board organised an excellent course for sewage works operators. Your Deputy Surveyor and Chargehand attended this course.

REFUSE COLLECTION & DISPOSAL.

A weekly system of refuse collection was commenced in June. This facility is much appreciated by many ratepayers, more particularly perhaps by those living in the more urbanised Parishes.

The arrangement whereby the Council dispose of the refuse from Melksham U.D.C., continues to work smoothly, but of necessity hastens the day when further sites for refuse tips have to be acquired.

The total cost of collection and disposal for the year ended 31st March, 1965 was £9128 from which has to be deducted £2142 for income received, giving a nett cost of £6986.

The approximate cost of the service per head of population was 9/8d. The Ministry of Housing & Local Government prepare each year an Annual Return of Local Authority costs - the main purpose of this is to enable Local Authorities to see how their costs compare with other approximately similar Authorities. If costs are much higher for a roughly similar service the implication is that the service is not run efficiently. The converse also applies. How do the Council's costs compare with others ? The average cost per head of population of the 58 rural Authorities included in the return is 13/9d - your cost is 9/8d.

Revenue from salvage was down £26 compared with 1963. No buyer could be found for waste paper or the lighter ferrous metals and the price of scrap iron remained low. The total quantity of salvage collected was : Scrap metal £66.15s.0d., Rags £42. 15s Od., 25% of this sum (£7.7.6d) was paid in bonus to the workmen engaged on this service.

The by-products of a modern materialist consumer society include motor cars of many shapes and sizes. When these get into the hands of people of straw they leave them to rust and disfigure the countryside or occasionally dump them on highway verges, common land etc. So far this problem is not an acute one in this area but it will obviously grow rapidly in the future. The powers of Local Authorities to deal with abandoned vehicles lacks teeth. The County Council appointed a Working Party (on which your Surveyor serves) to examine the matter. Although the County Council have taken the initiative, the problem must be dealt with by the County District Councils. We pray for additional powers in the future.

TOWN & COUNTRY PLANNING.

The number of applications submitted under the Town & Country Planning Acts and Building Byelaws were as follows:-

| | |
|-------------------------------|--|
| Total number of applications: | 435 (an increase of 11% over 1963). |
| Building Byelaws: | 264 approved. 1 refused. 2 sent for waiver. |
| Town & Country Planning Acts: | 198 approved. 38 refused. 18 withdrawn after negotiations. |

There was one appeal to the Ministry which was refused.

There was probably more building work in progress during the year than any previous time in the history of the Council. Work was in various stages of progress on the following estate developments:-

Highfield, Bromham (Devizes R.D.C.)
St. Mary's Close, Potterne. (Devizes R.D.C.)
Church Hill, Bromham. (Lawton Builders Ltd).
Church Hill, Bromham. (Gaiger Bros).
Blounts Court, Potterne. (Blounts Court Properties Ltd).
Springfield Road, Rowde. (Lime Tree Properties Ltd),, together with a large volume of improvement works, the erection of numerous farm buildings and the inevitable repairs.

The volume of work in connection with building in the application stage and the construction stage make very heavy demands on your staff. It is, of course, a good indicator of the level of prosperity in the area and will in due course swell the rate revenue very substantially.

WATER SUPPLY.

The North Wilts Water Board ran into difficulties in maintaining supplies and had to resort to emergency measures including restriction on the use of hose pipes and cutting off the supply at night time. Fortunately, these measures only affected a part of the Parish of Roundway.

The sources developed by the Council when they were the Water Authority had sufficient yield to withstand the exceptional drought conditions. All Water supply Undertakings should be in a position to do this otherwise they are failing in their function and abusing their monopoly rights. Droughts occur regularly.

Plans were made during the year to augment the Devizes Borough supply from the former R.D.C's sources. This is ironical reversal because the Devizes Borough and the Chippenham Borough Councils stated that they had sufficient surpluses to supply certain R.D.C's needs when these matters were under negotiation a few years ago.

The third borehole at Erlestoke which the Council started to develop was completed and brought into operation by the North Wilts Water Board.

A mains water supply is available to all parts of the district and no water is supplied from public standpipes. The total population supplied is 14,500 and the number of dwellinghouses 4202. No water in the district is plumbob-solvent.

SHOPS.

The Shops, Offices and Railway Premises Act came into operation during the year. This is the "office worker's charter" and is intended to secure for clerical workers satisfactory conditions relating to lighting, ventilation, heating, sanitary facilities etc. The Act defines the premises which must be registered with the Local Authority and all premises which it was thought might come within the scope of the Act have been circularised and asked to register. Only 34 premises have so far registered; it appears that many more should do so. Quite a number of premises are exempt in this area because they do not employ staff for more than the prescribed minimum number of hours.

FOOD PREMISES.

Food premises in the district have reached a satisfactory standard in regard to equipment and operation. The following table shows the number of premises:

| General Retail Food Shops. | Licen- ced premi- ses. | Butcher's Shops. | Bake- houses. | Fried Fish Shops. | Hospitals Schools & Institutes. | Cafes & Licenced premises serving full meals |
|-------------------------------------|---------------------------------|---------------------|------------------|-------------------------|---------------------------------------|--|
| 48 | 46 | 7 | 6 | 2 | 24 | 3 |

MILK SUPPLIES.

The Wiltshire County Council delegate to this Council their powers of licencing and sampling under the Milk (Special Designations) Regulations, 1960. The frequency of sampling was stepped up. The Council are reimbursed by the W.C.C., the cost of part of this work.

The number of Producer/Retailers and Distributors of raw milk was four. The number of Distributors selling heat-treated milk was five.

Sampling results:

| | Passed. | Failed. | Total. |
|---|----------|---------|--------|
| Methylene Blue test (for keeping quality. Tuberculin tested milk). | 250 | 1 | 251 |
| Phosphatase test (for efficient pasteurisation). | 17 | - | 17 |
| Biological test (for presence of tubercle bacillus and brucella abortus). T.B. B.A. | 91 77 | - 14 | 99 |

One hundred and ninety-two individual cow samples were taken to isolate the cows affected with brucella abortus and the owners were persuaded to send all their milk for pasteurisation until negative results were obtained. 42 Churn washings were taken of which 32 were satisfactory. Failures were due to inexpert cleaning

ICE CREAM.

Number of premises registered for the sale of Ice Cream is 52. Every premise was found to comply with the relevant regulations. At one time the Ice Cream Industry teemed with a multitude of small producers but it is now almost entirely in the hands of two large groups who supply all the shops in the district. One advantage of the larger producer is that they employ rigid bacteriological and chemical control to ensure, as far as possible, a product that does not give rise to any illness. Under present conditions the need for sampling is small.

DISEASES OF ANIMALS (WASTE FOODS) ORDER, 1957.

The number of premises licenced for the boiling of waste foods is five. The provisions of the Order, which requires the sterilisation of all waste foods before feeding livestock, has without doubt borne fruit. This is shown in the lower incidence of certain diseases in pigs.

PETROLEUM ACTS.

There are 80 premises registered under this Act and these are being regularly inspected to ensure that they maintain the required standard.

PUBLIC HEALTH COMPLAINTS.

| Type of complaint. | Number. | Remedied. | Outstanding. | No action necessary. |
|--------------------------------------|---------|-----------|--------------|----------------------|
| Housing (excluding Council housing). | 15 | 12 | 3 | - |
| Overcrowding. | 3 | 2 | 1 | - |
| Insanitary houses. | 6 | 2 | 2 | 2 |
| Sewerage. | 5 | 4 | 1 | - |
| Drainage. | 9 | 7 | 2 | - |
| River pollution. | 3 | 2 | 1 | - |
| Water. | 3 | - | - | 3 |
| Refuse. | 6 | 6 | - | - |
| Keeping of animals. | 2 | 2 | - | - |
| Fly infestation. | 5 | 5 | - | - |
| Rodent infestation. | 89 | 89 | - | - |
| Footpaths. | 2 | 2 | - | - |
| Smoke. | - | - | - | - |
| Offensive accumulations. | 3 | 3 | - | - |
| Miscellaneous. | 7 | 4 | - | 3 |
| TOTAL : | 158 | 140 | 10 | 8 |

SUMMARY OF INSPECTIONS.

| | |
|--------------------------|------|
| Miscellaneous. | 82 |
| Housing. | 464 |
| Nuisances. | 107 |
| Drainage. | 406 |
| Sewerage. | 196 |
| Water supply. | 22 |
| Dairies. | 7 |
| Milk sampling. | 268 |
| Food inspection. | 224 |
| Infectious diseases. | 51 |
| Food shops. | 174 |
| Bakehouses. | 112 |
| Refuse. | 27 |
| Workshops & factories. | 74 |
| Petroleum regulations. | 147 |
| Rodent control. | 18 |
| Council houses. | 2211 |
| Town & Country planning. | 232 |
| Building inspection. | 1421 |
| Diseases in animals. | 12 |
| Water samples. | 19 |

RODENT CONTROL.

Regular and systematic inspection and treatment of premises has been maintained during the year. Details of visits made and the treatment carried out are shown in the following table.

Sewers in most of the larger villages were test baited and results showed no infestation.

The Council continues to share the services of a Rodent Operator with the Devizes Borough Council and with co-operation on both sides the arrangement works satisfactorily.

| | Type of property. | | | | |
|--|---------------------------------|--|--|--------------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| | Non-Agricultural. | | | | |
| | (1) Local Auth- ority. | (2) Dwelling houses (incl. Council houses.) | (3) All other (incl. business premises.) | (4) Total of Cols. 1,2 & 3. | (5) Agri- cult- ural. |
| (1) Number of properties in L.A's district. | 9 | 4202 | 245 | 4451 | 845 |
| (2) Total No. of properties insp. as a result of notification. | - | 68 | 3 | 71 | - |
| No. of such properties found to be infested by:- | | | | | |
| Common) Major. | - | 10 | 1 | 11 | - |
| Rat.) Minor. | - | 50 | 14 | 52 | - |
| Ship) Major. | - | - | - | - | - |
| Rat.) Minor. | - | - | - | - | - |
| House) Major. | - | 8 | - | 8 | - |
| mouse.) Minor. | - | - | - | - | - |
| (3) Total No. of properties insp. in the course of survey under the Act. | 9 | 2309 | 162 | 2408 | 56 |
| Number of such properties found to be infested by:- | | | | | |
| Common) Major. | 5 | 20 | 1 | 26 | - |
| Rat.) Minor. | 4 | 150 | 1 | 155 | - |
| Ship) Major. | - | - | - | - | - |
| Rat.) Minor. | - | - | - | - | - |
| House) Major. | - | 8 | - | 8 | - |
| mouse.) Minor. | - | - | - | - | - |

Continued:-

| | Type of property. | | | | |
|---|-------------------|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| | Non-Agricultural. | | | | |
| | (1) | (2) | (3) | (4) | (5) |
| (4) Total number of properties otherwise inspected e.g. when visited primarily for some other purpose. | - | - | - | - | - |
| (6) Number of infested properties (in secs 2,3 & 4) treated by L.A. | 9 | 241 | 10 | 260 | 30 |
| (7) Total treatments carried out incl. re-treatments. | - | - | - | - | - |
| (8) Number of notices served under sec.4 of the Act. (a) Treatment. (b) Structural work i.e., proofing. | - | - | - | - | - |
| (9) Number of cases in which default action was taken following issue of a notice under Sec. 4 of the Act. | - | - | - | - | - |
| (10) Legal proceedings. | - | - | - | - | - |
| Number of block control schemes carried out: | | 26. | | | |

MEAT INSPECTION.

Two slaughterhouses, one solely for the requirements of a single butcher and the other serving four or five butchers in the district, have been extremely well maintained and operated. The standard of slaughtering and dressing is high resulting in first class presentation of meat.

The number of carcasses inspected and condemned was as follows:-

| | Cattle excluding cows. | Cows. | Calves. | Sheep and lambs. | Pigs. |
|--|------------------------------|--------|---------|------------------------|-------|
| Number killed and inspected. | 557 | 102 | 8 | 306 | 1084 |
| <u>ALL DISEASES EXCEPT TUBERCULOSIS AND CYSTICERCOSIS.</u> | | | | | |
| Whole carcasses condemned. | - | - | 1 | 3 | - |
| Carcasses of which some part or organ was condemned. | 52 | 21 | 2 | 3 | |
| Percentage of the number inspected affected with disease. | 9.34% | 20.59% | 37.50% | 1.96% | 4.89% |
| <u>TUBERCULOSIS ONLY.</u> | | | | | |
| Whole carcasses condemned. | - | - | - | - | - |
| Carcasses of which some part or organ was condemned. | - | - | - | - | 10 |
| Percentage of the number inspected affected with tuberculosis. | - | - | - | - | .92% |
| <u>CYSTICERCOSIS.</u> | | | | | |
| Carcasses of which some part or organ was condemned. | 5 | 3 | - | - | - |
| Percentage of the number inspected affected with cysticercosis. | .90% | 2.94% | - | - | - |

FACTORIES ACT, 1937 & 1959.

The majority of Parishes have at least one factory in the form of a village garage, builder's workshop or bakery. It is usual to carry out inspections under the Factories Act in conjunction with visits under the Petroleum Regulations or the Food & Drugs Act.

Details of visits are as follows:-

Part 1 of the Act.

1. Inspections for the purpose of provisions as to health.

| <u>Premises.</u> | <u>Number on Register.</u> | <u>Inspec-</u> <u>tions.</u> | <u>Number of Notices.</u> | <u>Occupiers prosecuted.</u> |
|---|----------------------------|---------------------------------|---------------------------|------------------------------|
| (1) Factories not using mechanical power. | 1 | 1 | - | - |
| (2) Factories using mechanical power. | 54 | 73 | - | - |
| (3) Other premises (not including outworkers premises). | - | - | - | - |

2. Cases in which defects were found,

| <u>Particulars.</u> | <u>Found.</u> | <u>Remedied.</u> | <u>Referred</u> | | |
|-------------------------------------|---------------|------------------|--------------------|--------------------|--------------------------------|
| | | | <u>To HM Insp.</u> | <u>By HM Insp.</u> | <u>Number of prosecutions.</u> |
| Want of cleanliness (S1) | - | - | - | - | - |
| Overcrowding (S2) | - | - | - | - | - |
| Unreasonable temperature (S3) | - | - | - | - | - |
| Inadequate ventilation (S4) | - | - | - | - | - |
| Ineffective drainage of floors (S6) | - | - | - | - | - |
| Sanitary conveniences (S7) | - | - | - | - | - |
| (a) Insufficient | 1 | - | - | 1 | - |
| (b) Unsuitable or defective. | 2 | 2 | - | 2 | - |
| (c) Not separate for sexes. | - | - | - | - | - |
| Other offences (except outwork) | - | - | - | - | - |

Part VIII of the Act.

Eight premises are registered for outworkers for the making of wearing apparel. No premises required any action to be taken.

Appendix i.

HOUSING RETURN

The following is a copy of a return made to the County Medical Officer of Health which is reproduced giving detailed information on certain aspects of housing.

| | |
|---|------|
| 1. Number of permanent dwellings in the district at the end of the year. | 4195 |
| 2. Number of permanent dwellings in the district owned by the L.A. | 964 |
| 3. Number of temporary dwellings in the district owned by the L.A. | Nil. |
| 4. Number of applications for Council houses at end of year. | 350. |
| 5. <u>Inspection of dwellings during the year.</u> | |
| (i) No. of dwellings inspected under the Public Health or Housing Acts. | 45 |
| (ii) Number of dwellings found to be unfit. | 45 |
| 6. Number of dwellings rendered fit as a result of informal action. | 39 |
| 7. <u>Action under statutory powers.</u> | |
| A. <u>Proceedings under sections 9,10,12 Housing, 1957.</u> | |
| (i) Number of dwellings where notices were served requiring defects to be remedied. | Nil. |
| (ii) Number of dwellings rendered fit after service of formal notices. | |
| (a) By owners. | Nil. |
| (b) By L.A. in default. | Nil. |
| B. <u>Proceedings under the Public Health Acts.</u> | |
| (i) Number of dwellings where formal notices were servied. | Nil. |
| (ii) Number of dwellings made fit as a result of formal notices. | |
| (a) By owners. | Nil. |
| (b) By L.A. in default. | Nil. |

C. Proceedings under Section 16, Housing Act, 1957.

- (i) Number of Demolition Orders made. 2
- (ii) Number of dwellings demolished as a result of Demolition Orders. Nil.
- (iii) Number of Undertakings accepted to make fit or not to relet. Nil.
- (iv) Number of dwellings made fit as a result of Undertakings. Nil.

D. Proceedings under Sections 42,43,64,48 Housing Act, 1957.

- (i) Number of dwellings in Clearance Areas upon which Demolition Orders were made. Nil.
- (ii) Number of dwellings demolished as a result of Demolition Order. Nil.
- (iii) Number of dwellings in Clearance Areas which have been retained as temporary accommodation. Nil.

E. Proceedings under Sections 17,18,27 Housing Act, 1957. and Section 26 Housing Act, 1961.

- (i) Number of dwellings where Closing Orders made. 1
- (ii) Number of dwellings closed as a result of Closing Orders or Undertakings by owners. Nil.

F. Proceedings under Section 76 Housing Act, 1957.

- (i) Number of cases of overcrowding at end of year. Nil.
- (ii) Number of cases of overcrowding discovered during year. Nil.
- (iii) Number of cases of overcrowding abated during the year. Nil.

